

Political Views of Poles and Electoral Preferences in the 2023 Parliamentary Election

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Abstract

The political views of the electorate are reflected in electoral preferences, but a proper understanding of classical ideological attitudes is difficult in Poland due to inconsistencies in the programmes and practices of political parties and the specific awareness of voters towards the issue under study. The aim of this study was to identify the consistency (or lack of there) between the ideological self-identification of Polish voters and their issue-positions profiles (cultural and economic) with linking this issue to electoral preferences. The study poses the main research question: (Q1) Are the self-identified political views of respondents, related to their profiles on specific issues (cultural and economic)? With clarification: (Q1.2) Is there a relation between respondents' political views and electoral preferences? The author's survey was conducted on a group of adult Poles (N=1069). It allowed to verify the initial assumptions and to indicate important conclusions, confirming that the self-placement political views of Poles coincide with their declared positions on specific issues only on the cultural level. In addition the declared positions on specific issues (economic or cultural) of respondents are related to their electoral preferences, depending on: cultural right-wing respondents prefer right-wing conservative parties, while cultural left-wing respondents choose left-liberal parties in the highest percentage.

Keywords: political views; voting preferences; parliamentary elections; liberalism; conservatism

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1. Introduction

The political views and voting preferences of the electorate are issues that are frequently addressed in political science (Corcoran, 2004; Davenport, Franco & Iyengar, 2022; Kim & Margalit, 2017; Szafraniec & Grygieńć, 2019). Indeed, research conducted in various countries indicates that it is the political views of voters that have a decisive impact on the decisions made at the ballot box (Carmines & D'Amico, 2015; Epstein & Merzhon, 1996; Esarey, Salmon & Barrilleaux, 2012; Hinich & Munger, 1996; Kwiatkowska, 2018; Turska-Kawa & Wojtasik, 2010).

Importantly, however, understanding classical political ideologies in Poland is hampered by the problematic nature of indicating the profile of political parties using the classical left-right axis (Andrejuk, 2020; Pająk-Patkowska, 2010; Tomczak, 2012; Wojtasik, 2011). Contemporary analyses even assume difficulties in determining the ideological nature of Polish political parties and, in the longer term, of successive governments (Tavits & Letki, 2009). This is important because voters often identify with the political parties they support, and their views can evolve significantly, depending on changes in the party system (Czeźnik, Miśta & Żerkowska-Balas, 2020; Kosowska-Gąstoł & Wyciślak, 2010).

Research on the political views of the electorate in Poland thus focuses on two main levels: declarative (Bieńkowski & Świdorska, 2017; Gronowski & Plewa, 2023; Szczepański, 2021) and factual (Godlewski, 2012; Godlewski, 2016; Pieniężny, 2025b). Regardless of the research approach used, a dichotomous division of the key features shaping political views into cultural and economic is noticeable among Polish voters (Jednaka, 1997; Kwiatkowska et al., 2016; Marmola & Wojtasik, 2014; Tybuchowska-Hartlińska, 2013; Żerkowska-Balas, Lyubashenko & Kwiatkowska, 2016).

This phenomenon has its bearing on the study of electoral preferences of the electorate. In connection with the divergence of political parties' programmes and the way in which classical ideologies are understood at the cultural and economic levels, two basic theoretical models have crystallised in the scientific literature to explain the electorate's voting preferences in the context of their political views (Jednaka, 1997). These are, firstly, the cultural model, which assumes that cultural issues are crucial for voters both in the way they vote and in their self-identification (Burlacu, 2020; Hopkins & Sigler, 2025; Jou, 2011; Lachat, 2008; Pieniężny, 2025a; Riera & Cantu, 2022; Sum & Badescu, 2008; Visconti, 2022; Wattier, 1983) and, secondly, the economic model, underpinned by the assumption that voters are primarily guided by economic considerations when determining their political views and deciding to vote for a particular party (Aidt, 2000; Anderson, 2000; Dorussen & Taylor, 2002; Duch, 2001; Fossati, 2014; Lewis-Beck & Nadeau, 2011; Lewis-Beck & Paldam, 2000; Roberts, 2008; Whitten & Palmer, 1999). The present work is therefore embedded in the first of the proposed theoretical models, which seems to more fully explain the indicated issue on the ground.

The structure of the paper was prepared in such a way as to fulfil the purpose of the considerations carried out. Already the introduction contains a review of the literature on research on electoral preferences and political views of Poles and the reasons for their formation. The theoretical part of the text, on the other hand, focuses on the proper conceptual distinction, the classical features of certain political views. The methodological part describes the method of conducting the survey, data collection and the research sample, as well as the research procedure that was carried out to analyse the results. This is followed by an indication in the empirical part of the results of the conducted research, which were subjected to statistical analysis. The text concludes with a summary in which the research questions are answered, the hypotheses are verified, and the main conclusions drawn from the analysis. This section also includes recommendations for the future.

2. Theoretical conceptualization

For years, political science in Poland has pointed out the difficulty of distinguishing between basic definitional concepts that define political views. As I mentioned in the introduction, previous research indicates that moving on the axes of right-left views is clearly curved among Polish society (Godlewski, 2012; Godlewski, 2016; Marzęcki, 2023; Pieniężny, 2024).

This seems to be closely related to the inconsistent profiles of political parties in this regard, whose views are very often and readily identified with by voters (Filipczak-Białkowska, 2021; Kosowska-Gąstoł, 2021). Indeed, the ideal would be to apply the model division of political parties into right-wing and left-wing, as such a division has existed almost since the 19th century (Epstein, 1979). The case of the Polish party system is far from the possibility of a classical differentiation of political parties into right-wing and left-wing ones.

The best example of the accuracy of such a statement is the programme and action of Law and Justice (PiS), whose attitude to the Catholic Church, aversion to migrants and minorities, while respecting tradition, undoubtedly meets the premises of considering this party as right-wing. However, the situation is different in the economic sphere, where this political party is definitely closer to the one associated with left-wing parties - socialism (Lewandowski, 2024). Thus, it can be concluded that this political party is right-wing only on a cultural level, and this may cause interpretative difficulties at the level of a holistic understanding of presented concepts (Godlewski, 2012; Godlewski, 2016; Pieniężny, 2024; Pieniężny, 2025b). Additionally, an important issue to be resolved from the point of view of this work is to verify whether, according to the indicated assumption, Law and Justice voters decide to support this political party due to the cultural component or whether this group will include voters self-placement themselves left-wing due to the economic nature of the party's demands.

In the present study, in order to maintain the reliability of the terms used, it therefore proved necessary to operationalise the key terms related to the possibility of defining political views, i.e. 'the right' and 'the left', and in particular the way they are understood in a form adapted to the conditions of the Polish political system. Indeed, I considered this to be an appropriate distinction that is relevant to the considerations at hand dealing exclusively with the theme of right-wing and left-wing politics. Despite studies conducted in the literature proving that rivalries between parties do not always fit into a single traditional axis (Hillen & Steinter, 2020; Rovny & Edwards, 2012), this study focuses rather on the consistency of voters' views and the electoral preferences that follow (or not follow) from it.

In relation to this theoretical assumption, by 'the left', I consider the key definitional elements inherent only in the term indicated to be: a focus on freedom for minorities; recognition of democracy as the best form of government; a demand for equality, tolerance and pluralism; and a focus on the individual and the provision of a range of rights and freedoms (Arnold, 2009; Heywood, 2003; Lightfoot, 2005; Puddington, 2007; Young, 2002). Among the key issues, I can also point to: (1) Support for the public economic sector, expansion of state control over the economy and the market, state participation in economic planning, active social policy, and income redistribution through progressive tax policy; (2) Preference for a parliamentary form of government, a proportional electoral system¹; (3) an active role for trade unions in the formulation and implementation of public policy; (4) Advocating the renunciation of the use of force in resolving international conflicts and affirming political and economic integration; (5) On the axiological level, it emphasizes the freedom of development of individuals, gender equality, the protection of children's rights, the rejection of extreme moral rigorism, and the separation of church and state (Antoszewski & Herbut, 2004; Wojtasik, 2011).

As far as the concept of 'the right', I consider another key definitional elements inherent only in the term indicated to be: (1) Free enterprise as the only form of economic management; (2) Limiting the role of the state in the economy solely to creating a system of incentives for economic activity; (3) Negative attitude towards social policy; (4) Economic 'orthodoxy' expressed in a belief in the 'invisible hand of the market'; (5) Advocating for maximum tax reduction; (6) Attachment to national traditions, hostile attitude towards minorities, negative attitude towards immigrants (especially those of color); (7) Reluctance to enter into international economic structures; (8) Attachment to the idea of public order and law and order, demand for severe punishment of criminals; (9) Support for the church, disapproval of phenomena departing from traditional Christian values; (10) Disregard for social progress (Antoszewski & Herbut, 2004; Wojtasik, 2011).

In view of this assumption, I took as the aim of the research the identification of the consistency (or lack of there) between the ideological self-identification

of Polish voters and their issue-positions profiles (cultural and economic) with linking this issue to electoral preferences

In pursuit of the stated objectives, I posed the key research question: (Q1) Are the self-identified political views of respondents, related to their profiles on specific issues (cultural and economic)? with clarification: (Q1.2) Is there a relation between political views and respondents' voting preferences? The following hypotheses are a preliminary attempt to answer these: (H1) The self-identified political views of respondents relate with the profiles of respondents only on a cultural level. (H1.2) Cultural right-wing respondents prefer right-wing conservative parties, while cultural left-wing respondents choose left-liberal parties in the highest percentage. At this point, it should be noted that hypothesis 'O' was potentially accepted, indicating that the economic dimension profiles does not significantly differentiate the group of respondents under study.

The manner in which the research questions and hypotheses were formulated was based on the pioneering research of Tomasz Godlewski (2012; 2016), who not only proposed the research tool, but also successfully tested it empirically, pointing to the conclusions indicated in the hypotheses. However, as the aforementioned author's study was conducted almost 10 years ago, in the face of significant social and political changes in Poland, the results may turn out to be quite different.

3. Methodology

In order to compare the self-placement political views of Poles and declared positions on specific issues (cultural and economic), as well as to relate them to the respondents' electoral preferences as expressed in the Polish parliamentary elections in 2023, I conducted a survey using the diagnostic survey technique, the results of which I then subjected to statistical analysis. The period during which the survey was conducted was 01 December 2023–26 April 2024.

The survey sample included 1,069 people. This number was generated on the basis of the annual reports of the Central Statistical Office (GUS) concerning the population of Poland. The study population was divided by stratified-quota selection. The stratified selection included place of residence by voivodeship and urban-rural, while the quota selection included variables such as gender and age. The percentage of each of these variables in the research sample corresponded to the percentage of each group in the total adult population, as expressed in annual GUS publications, in this case for the year 2023.

The survey was conducted using the snowballing approach method, with self-completion survey. During the survey, 1712 questionnaires were distributed, of which 1371 (80.1%) were completed. Of these, 1069 (62.4%) were qualified for analysis. The only eligibility criterion was the completeness of the questionnaire. I conducted the survey personally, with the help of researchers from various

academic centres in Poland, who assisted me in distributing the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed among available individuals (family, friends, neighbors, students and their families, etc.) using the snowball method. Therefore, the analysis has a limitation in that it is not possible to extend the conclusions to the entire population of Polish voters as the sample is not representative. Importantly, neither I nor the questionnaire distributors assisted in completing the questionnaire, provided comments or answered the respondents' questions, and therefore did not influence the outcome of the study.

The sample consisted of 561 women (52.5%) and 508 men (47.5%). The age structure was as follows: 93 (8.7%) respondents were in the 18–24 age bracket, 173 (16.2%) respondents were in the 25–34 age bracket, 212 (19.8%) respondents were in the 35–44 age bracket, 178 (16.7%) respondents were in the 45–54 age bracket, 159 (14.9%) respondents were in the 55–64 age bracket and 254 (23.8%) respondents were voters aged 65 and over.

As for the respondents' place of residence, taking into account the size of the locality, 421 (39.4%) respondents declared they lived in a rural area, while 648 (60.6%) declared they lived in a city. In the latter group, a city of up to 20 000 inhabitants was inhabited by 203 (19.0%) respondents, a city of over 20 000, up to 50 000 inhabitants was inhabited by 77 (7.2%) respondents. A city of over 50,000, but up to 100,000 inhabitants was inhabited by 46 (4.3%) respondents. 240 (22.5%) respondents lived in a city with more than 100,000 to 500,000 inhabitants, and 82 (7.7%) respondents lived in cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants.

The breakdown of respondents by province of residence is presented in Table 1.

Table 1:
Residence of respondents by voivodeship

Voivodeship	Number of respondents	% of respondents
dolnośląskie	83	7,8%
kujawsko-pomorskie	57	5,3%
lubelskie	61	5,7%
lubuskie	34	3,2%
łódzkie	70	6,5%
małopolskie	97	9,1%
mazowieckie	140	13,1%
opolskie	29	2,7%
podkarpackie	60	5,6%
podlaskie	35	3,3%
pomorskie	65	6,1%
śląskie	126	11,8%
świętokrzyskie	33	3,1%
warmińsko-mazurskie	38	3,6%
wielkopolskie	96	9,0%
zachodniopomorskie	45	4,2%
Total	1069	100%

Source: The Author.

The metric section of the questionnaire also examined other variables, which, however, were not representative layers of measurement and are not used for further analysis. These were in particular the respondents' education. The distribution of the sample in terms of education is presented in Table 2 to enable readers to assess how selection bias might shape the results.

Table 2:
Distribution of respondents' education

Level of education	Number of respondents	% of respondents
primary	25	2,3%
vocational	206	19,3%
secondary	410	38,4%
higher	428	40,0%
Total	1069	100%

Source: The Author.

In order to realise the research objective set out in this research, as well as to answer the research problems and verify the hypotheses, I asked about political preferences for the 2023 general election in the survey questionnaire. Respondents were given a choice of the name of each of the electoral committees that exceeded the 3% level, as well as the addition of an ‘other party’ option with the option to enter the party’s name and declare no vote or no memory. As for respondents’ political views, I asked about them in two ways. The first was to ask them to self-identity their political views. Respondents could use a five-point scale—right-wing, centre-right, centre, centre-left and left-wing—with the option ‘don’t know/can’t say’. A second way was to verify such self-placement against seven pairs of opposing statements, asking for an indication of the degree of closeness of the respondent’s views to one of them. The statements related to cultural issues (values that should guide society, defining the role of the Catholic Church in the state and the right of sexual minorities to express their views - statements 1, 2 and 7) and economic issues (issues of property, tax law, social activities of the state and the role of trade unions - statements 3, 4, 5 and 6). This question was the use of a scale prepared and repeatedly tested by Tomasz Godlewski (2012; 2016), which made it possible to indicate the understanding of right-wingness and left-wingness specific to Polish society. Pairs of opposing statements are presented in Table 3.

Table 3:
Pairs of opposing statements verifying the declared positions of respondents on specific issues (cultural and economic)

Statement	Respondent's opinion					Statement
1A. Society should revise its views by adapting them to a changing world.	1	2	3	4	5	1B. Society should be faithful to traditional values and views.
2A. The state should be guided by the principle of separation of state and church.	1	2	3	4	5	2B. The state should adhere to Christian values, Catholicism should be the state religion.
3A. The most important industrial plants should remain state-owned.	1	2	3	4	5	3B. Ownership should be exclusively private.
4A. Taxes should be differentiated according to citizens' incomes.	1	2	3	4	5	4B. The tax system should be unified regardless of citizens' income (flat tax).

Statement	Respondent's opinion	Statement
5A. The state should carry out activities in the social and community sphere to the greatest extent possible.	1 2 3 4 5	5B. The state should keep social and societal activities to a minimum.
6A. Trade unions should play a major role in society and the state.	1 2 3 4 5	6B. The role of trade unions should be kept to a minimum in society and the state.
7A. Sexual minorities should have the unfettered right to express their views and beliefs.	1 2 3 4 5	7B. For the sake of social welfare, sexual minorities should have their right to express their views and beliefs restricted.

Source: The Author based on: Godlewski, 2012; Godlewski, 2016.

4. Analysis. Political views and voting preferences of respondents

The political views self-placement by respondents during the survey varied. This is presented in Table 4.

Table 4:
Political views self-placed by respondents

Political views	Number of respondents	% of respondents
no answer	5	0,5%
right-wing	242	22,6%
centre-right	140	13,1%
centre	136	12,7%
centre-left	110	10,3%
left-wing	123	11,5%
don't know / can't tell	313	29,3%
Total	1069	100%

Source: The Author.

A table of the frequency of assessment of successive theses verifying the declared positions on specific issues (cultural and economic) of respondents is included in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5:

Table of frequency of evaluation of subsequent cultural theses verifying the declared positions of respondents

Statement's number	Response	Frequency	%
Statements 1	Definitely 'Society should revise its views by adapting them to a changing world'	293	27,4%
	Rather 'Society should revise its views by adapting them to a changing world'	243	22,7%
	Hard to say	197	18,4%
	Rather 'Society should be faithful to traditional values and views'	158	14,8%
	Definitely 'Society should be faithful to traditional values and views'	178	16,7%
Statements 2	Definitely 'The state should be guided by the principle of separation of state and church'	430	40,1%
	Rather 'The state should be guided by the principle of separation of state and church'	177	16,6%
	Hard to say	177	16,6%
	Rather 'The state should adhere to Christian values, Catholicism should be the state religion'	129	12,1%
	Definitely 'The state should adhere to Christian values, Catholicism should be the state religion'	156	14,6%
Statements 7	Definitely 'Sexual minorities should have the unfettered right to express their views and beliefs'	226	21,1%
	Rather 'Sexual minorities should have the unfettered right to express their views and beliefs'	197	18,4%
	Hard to say	239	22,4%
	Rather 'For the sake of social welfare, sexual minorities should have their right to express their views and beliefs restricted'	178	16,7%
	Definitely 'For the sake of social welfare, sexual minorities should have their right to express their views and beliefs restricted'	229	21,4%

Source: The Author.

In Table 5, it is clear that all cultural issues (statements 1, 2 and 7) significantly differentiate respondents. The combination of 'Definitely A' and 'Rather A' responses and 'Definitely B' and 'Rather B' responses indicate differences. Significantly, there is always a difference in favour of the more cultural left-wing answers, but the percentage of people who hold right-wing values close to their cultural worldview is high. In other words, there is a clear predominance of people who hold left-wing views on the issues discussed.

Table 6:

Table of frequency of evaluation of subsequent economic theses verifying the declared positions of respondents

Statement's number	Response	Frequency	%
Statements 3	Definitely 'The most important industrial plants should remain state-owned'	311	29,1%
	Rather 'The most important industrial plants should remain state-owned'	223	20,9%
	Hard to say	351	32,8%
	Rather 'Ownership should be exclusively private'	101	9,4%
	Definitely 'Ownership should be exclusively private'	83	7,8%
Statements 4	Definitely 'Taxes should be differentiated according to citizens' incomes'	381	35,6%
	Rather 'Taxes should be differentiated according to citizens' incomes'	265	24,8%
	Hard to say	237	22,2%
	Rather 'The tax system should be unified regardless of citizens' income (flat tax)'	86	8,0%
	Definitely 'The tax system should be unified regardless of citizens' income (flat tax)'	100	9,4%
Statements 5	Definitely 'The state should carry out activities in the social and community sphere to the greatest extent possible'	307	28,7%
	Rather 'The state should carry out activities in the social and community sphere to the greatest extent possible'	298	27,9%
	Hard to say	277	25,9%
	Rather 'The state should keep social and societal activities to a minimum'	115	10,8%
	Definitely 'The state should keep social and societal activities to a minimum'	72	6,7%
Statements 6	Definitely 'Trade unions should play a major role in society and the state'	217	20,3%
	Rather 'Trade unions should play a major role in society and the state'	288	26,9%
	Hard to say	417	39,0%
	Rather 'The role of trade unions should be kept to a minimum in society and the state'	99	9,3%
	Definitely 'The role of trade unions should be kept to a minimum in society and the state'	48	4,5%

Source: The Author.

As for economic issues in table 6 (statements 2, 3, 4 and 5), on the other hand, the differences are much more pronounced, also in favour of left-wing views. This may mean that some respondents holding right-wing views on cultural issues also hold left-wing economic views.

Central to the research objective, however, was the comparison of respondents' self-placements with their declared positions on specific issues (cultural and economic). Since self-identified views were examined using a single variable (a direct response to the question about self-placement), other elements of the measurement also had to be standardized—responses to questions about their positions on specific issues: in the cultural sphere and, analogously, in the economic sphere. To do this, I decided to prepare indexes (creating in this way quasi-metric variables): (1) positions on cultural views (the average response of each respondent to questions 1, 2, and 7)² and (2) position on economic views (the average response of each respondent to questions 3, 4, 5, and 6)³. Therefore this two types of variables were analysed: quantitative and nominal, this could be done in two ways: (1) by conducting a correlation test and (2) by conducting an ANOVA analysis. I decided to use both approaches.

As a first step, I decided to verify the correlation between the variables using Spearman's rho statistical test. In the course of this analysis, however, I discarded respondents who marked the answer 'don't know/can't determine' due to the invalidity of comparing this group with issue-position profiles. Since the indicated group of respondents is unable to perform self-placement, which is crucial for correct reasoning in relation to the adopted research assumptions, I considered the use of this group's responses to be invalid and methodologically incorrect.

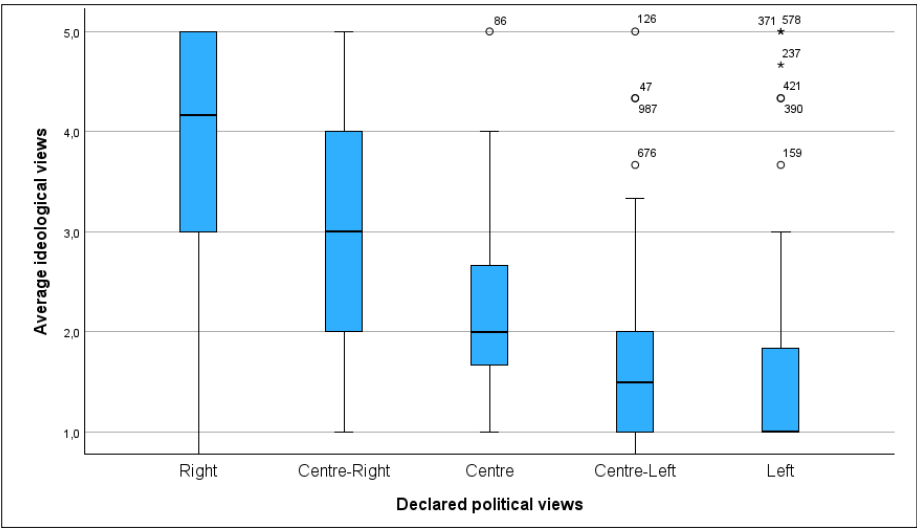
Thus, 751 respondents were included in the analysis. The correlation result between the self-placement of views and the average response to the 3 cultural statements (statements 1, 2 and 7 in the table) is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and the correlation coefficient is -0.696 , so the correlation is strong, negative. It can therefore be assumed that the more right-wing the self-placement of views, the more conservative they actually are when it comes to cultural issues. I then ran an identical test between again the self-placement of views and the mean this time of the responses to the 4 economic claims (claims 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the table). This time, however, the result did not turn out to be statistically significant ($p > 0.05$; $p = 0.104$) and, in addition, the correlation coefficient was at a minimum level of 0.059 . Thus, this test showed that there is no correlation between the respondents' self-placement views and their positions on the economic sphere, which may indicate an understanding of self-identification through the prism of purely cultural issues.

In the next step, I decided to carry out an ANOVA analysis, this time using all respondents already ($N = 1069$), due to the lack of risk of biasing the results through the specificity of this test. The statistical significance in terms of both cultural and economic averages was < 0.001 in both cases, so the differences are

statistically significant. In order to confirm this, I still conducted a Bonferroni post-hoc test. Its result indicated that the difference in means between groups was statistically significant at the 0.05 level, with the difference in the case of cultural issues always being <0.001 , while in the case of ecological issues the results were mixed, with many individual cases showing no difference in means at the statistically significant level.

I therefore decided to prepare box-plots verifying the distribution of mean responses to questions related to ideology and economics in conjunction with the self-placement of respondents' political views. The assumption was that those places themselves to be right-wing should have a higher average than those places themselves to be left-wing. Respondents who could not place their political views (N=751) were discarded in the analysis.

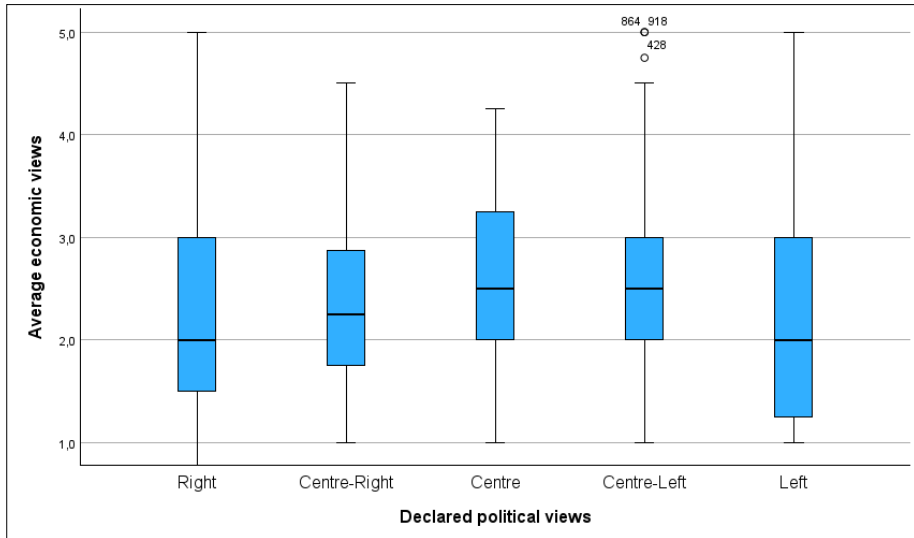
Figure 1:
Distribution of responses to questions on cultural issues among successive groups of self-placement political views (where 1.0 indicates fully left-wing views and 5.0 fully right-wing views)



Source: The Author.

Figure 2:

Distribution of responses to questions on economic issues among successive groups of self-placement political views (where 1.0 indicates fully left-wing views and 5.0 fully right-wing views)



Source: The Author.

The correlations seen in both charts are very clear. While the dominant range of cultural issues coincides with self-placement as those place themselves to be right-wing are closest to the mean of 5.0, and those place themselves to be left-wing are closest to the mean of 1.0, the range of evaluations of economic issues is at an almost identical level (between 2.0 and 2.5) in each group of respondents divided according to the self-placement of their political views. Thus, the analysis of the results clearly indicates that the self-placement of the respondents' views are solely due to the cultural issues with which they overlap, while the economic issues do not significantly differentiate the surveyed group, being irrelevant in determining their political views on a self-placement level.

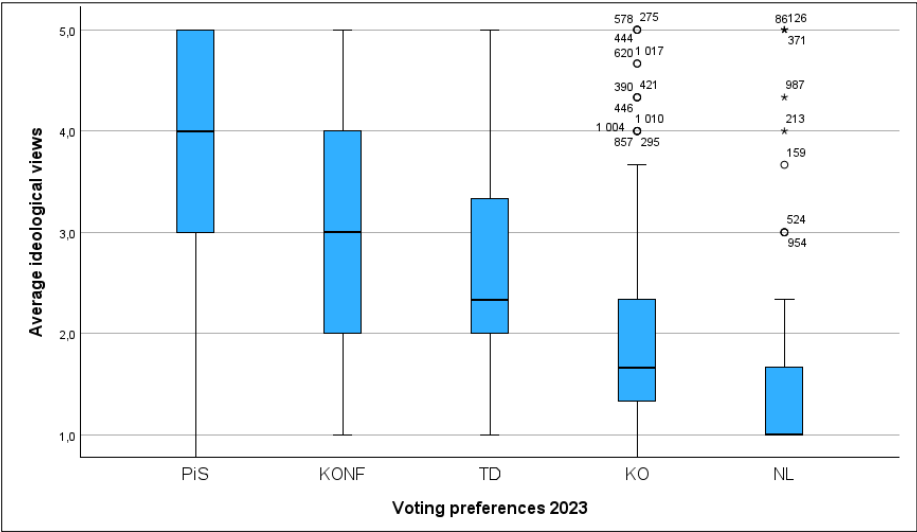
The results of the analyses confirm the results of research conducted on Polish voters in earlier years, demonstrating the exploration potential to apply the cultural model to the study of Poles' electoral preferences through the prism of their political views. This is because respondents under study identify themselves with certain political views mainly on a cultural level. The trends visible in both charts confirm that those place themselves to be right-wing have a higher mean axis of self-identification of political views than those place themselves to be left-wing only in terms of cultural issues, so they determine the respondents' evaluation of their own political views.

Since the results of the analyses indicated that it is the cultural issues that determine self-placement, further consideration is only given to respondents'

positions on two axes - cultural and economic. I contrasted both of these variables with the respondents' voting preferences.

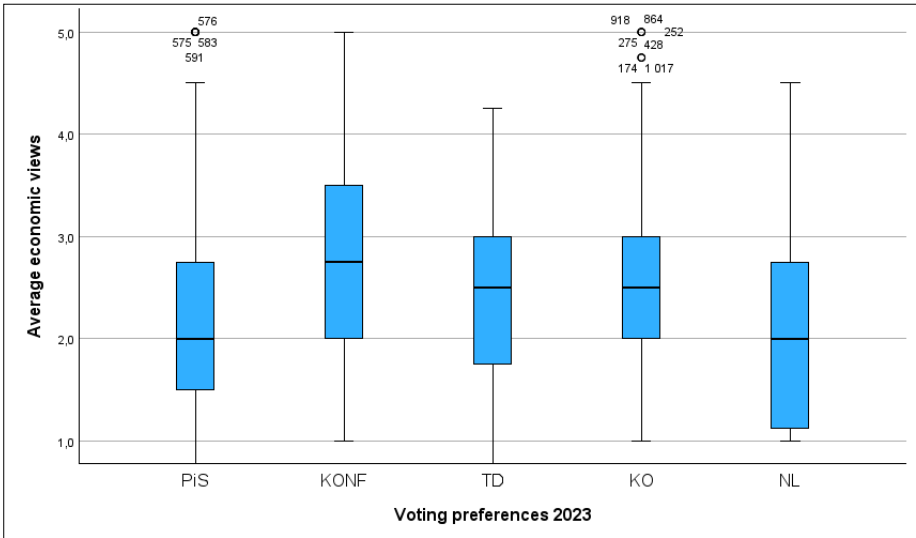
For further analysis, I compared the political preferences expressed in the 2023 parliamentary election with the respondents' declared positions on specific issues related to political views on (a) the cultural plane and (b) the economic plane. The results of the analyses are presented in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3:
Distribution of responses to questions on cultural issues among the electorates of the following political parties (where 1.0 means fully left-wing views and 5.0 means fully right-wing views in the classical sense)⁴



Source: The Author.

Figure 4:
Distribution of responses to questions on economic issues among the electorates
of the following political parties (where 1.0 means fully left-wing views and 5.0 means
fully right-wing views in classical terms)⁵



Source: The Author.

Analysing the data presented in Figures 3 and 4, it is clear that there is a relationship between respondents' political views on cultural issues and the political preferences expressed by respondents in the 2023 parliamentary election. This is a statistically significant relationship, and is clearly visible in the resulting trends.

It is also very interesting to analyse the link between views on economic issues and respondents' electoral preferences. Indeed, Figure 4 shows that while the most left-wing in economic views are generally left-wing (also on cultural issues) voters of the New Left, almost equally left-wing economically are voters of Law and Justice, describing themselves as right-wing and centre-right.

5. Conclusions

As a whole, the analysis carried out allows a number of important conclusions to be drawn. Firstly, the analysis made in this study has made it possible to answer the main research question: Are the self-identified political views of respondents, related to their profiles on specific issues (cultural and economic)? The corresponding hypothesis: The self-identified political views of respondents relate with the profiles of respondents only on a cultural level was confirmed, at the same time indicating the validity of hypothesis '0'. Indeed, the analysis conducted

showed that, in line with research conducted in earlier years (Godlewski, 2012; Godlewski, 2016; Szczepański, 2021), also on the occasion of the 2023 parliamentary elections, respondents defined their political views focusing exclusively on the cultural plane. Thus, it should be pointed out that respondents' self-placement of held political views are consistent compared to indicated positions on specific issues only in the cultural field, while in the economic field respondents' self-placement of held political views differ significantly from indicated positions on specific statements. Indeed, the box-plots (Charts 1 and 2) clearly show that the dominant range of declared positions in relation to self-placement among all groups of respondents divided by their declared views is between 2.0 and 2.5, while the range for cultural views oscillates between 1.0 and 4.2 and is proportional to self-placements.

Indeed, among respondents-PiS voters, the percentage of those self-placed their views as centre-left or left-wing was marginal, while among rs placed themselves as centre-right or right-wing (this electorate constituted the vast majority of PiS voters), declared positions on economic issues would have to be described as close to left-wing, in contrast to declared positions on cultural issues, which corresponded to self-placement. The presented results of the considerations correspond strongly with research conducted in Poland earlier (Sadura, 2023; Godlewski, 2012; Godlewski, 2016; Sokołowski, 2023). This is because right-wingness and left-wingness are understood among respondents through an cultural rather than an economic prism.

The statistical analysis of the results of our own research also made it possible to answer the clarified research question: Is there a relation between political views and respondents' electoral preferences?, also verifying the initial hypothesis: Cultural right-wing respondents prefer right-wing conservative parties, while cultural left-wing respondents choose left-liberal parties in the highest percentage. In view of the aforementioned assumption of the potential primacy of cultural issues over economic issues in shaping the political views of group under study, this hypothesis should be considered accurate, with the proviso that it refers to the cultural, part of the surveyed political views as indicated in the content. Very importantly, this correlation is statistically significant.

Concluding the survey as a whole, it should be pointed out that, regardless of their self-placement, all of the respondents are quite left-wing economically, while when it comes to cultural issues, respondents' self-placement relate to their declared positions on specific issues under study. In a strongly polarised society (Panek, 2017; Ruszkowski, Przestalski & Maranowski, 2020), where cultural issues dominate the public debate and the discourse of successive election campaigns (Annusewicz, 2011; Garlicki, 2010; Peszyński, 2018; Pieniężny, 2024; Piontek, 2025), this seems not to be a surprising issue, but the reasons for this state of affairs require further cyclical research. Thus, it should be considered that the aim of the research, which was identification of the consistency (or lack

of there) between the ideological self-identification of Polish voters and their issue-positions profiles (cultural and economic) with linking this issue to electoral preferences, has been fulfilled. However, it is important that such analyses should be extended to representative samples and repeated cyclically, and in a comparative manner, also analysing the understanding of the importance of political views among voters in different countries and regions, as well as the significance of these views in shaping electoral preferences.

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Endnotes:

- 1 Although this expression may seem rather characteristic of democratic political systems more generally, and thus not directly related to the left-right ideological divide, it is of great significance in the Polish context. The years of communist rule under the left-wing Polish United Workers' Party necessitated the inclusion, amongst left-wing demands, of issues that directly broke with the undemocratic order; hence, Polish researchers have raised this point, which – in accordance with academic rigour – I also cite here, although I agree that some of these elements appear to refer more to the institutional design and general normative foundations of a democratic order than to a distinct left-wing orientation. I would point out, however, that from a Polish perspective, such a clear identification of democratic tendencies within left-wing values is a consequence of recent political history, as highlighted by the researchers cited.
- 2 The internal consistency of statements 1, 2, and 7 was examined – Cronbach's alpha: 0,842. An examination of dimensionality was also conducted. KMO: 0,710. Barlett's test: $p < 0,01$.
- 3 The internal consistency of statements 3, 4, 5, and 6 was examined – Cronbach's alpha: 0,786. An examination of dimensionality was also conducted. KMO: 0,773. Barlett's test: $p < 0,01$.
- 4 ANOVA: $p < 0,001$; Bonferroni post-hoc test mean $p = 0.05$. The parties were arranged ideologically, in the order of the seats held in the Polish Parliament, which customarily correspond to the profiles of the political parties.
- 5 ANOVA: $p < 0,001$; Bonferroni post-hoc test mean $p = 0.05$.